

6. **Provide correct information:** Any information availed to the client should be correct. This helps them make informed decisions.
7. **Endeavour to up build :** Counseling should always be done in such a way that the client is helped to recognize and build on their strengths, as well as to develop a positive attitude to life.

A good counsellor is the one who brings his or her human qualities and experiences that have influenced him or her to help the counselee. The human dimension is one of the most powerful determinants of the therapeutic relationship between the counsellor and the client. The following are some of the skills, qualities and characteristics of an effective counsellor.

1. **Wise and warm.** A counselor should create a warm and caring environment, and never disapprove of the client.
2. **Competent.** A counsellor must know his or her strengths and weaknesses. Lack of self-knowledge can hinder the counselor's perception of the client. To be efficient and effective. A counsellor must continually increase his or her knowledge, seek new life experiences, develop new skills, try new ideas and approaches, and be able to evaluate his or her own effectiveness.
3. **Understanding.** Counselling is a process where the counsellor invites the clients to share their thoughts, feelings, experiences, and problems. Counselors should understand the counselee and his or her problem.
4. **Listening.** A counsellor must put her own needs aside and focus on the needs of the counselee for the duration of the counselling session. She must listen and focus exclusively on the client and his problems. The counsellor should not talk about her own issues, except where this is for the direct benefit of the client. Passive listening is usually the best place to start. Listening enables the counsellor to understand the client fully. It is a psychological tool that heals. The client feels relieved because he has somebody who can listen to his problems.
5. **Unconditional acceptance.** A counselor accepts the counselee as they are. This means accepting them unconditionally and seeing them as a human being who can make his or her own decisions.
6. **Observant.** The counsellor should observe keenly the facial expressions, use of gestures, fidgeting, raising and lowering of tone, tears or crying. Body language is a very powerful tool of communication and is more often than not used unconsciously. A counsellor should not take it for granted when a client yawns, shakes his head, shrugs shoulders or folds his hands. These actions are usually an indication of what the client is going through and should not be overlooked. He should encourage the client to speak about what he is feeling and endeavor to notice discrepancies, if any between what the client is saying and what he or she is expressing through non-verbal communication. For example, a client smiling while is narrating a very sad experience.
7. **Self-disclosure/genuineness.** This means that the counsellor should accurately present himself to the client. The counsellor should not feign his concern for the client. This may also mean sharing one's own experiences that are related to the client's experiences and must, be guided by their own willingness to help the client.
8. **Immediacy.** This means sharing with the client the feelings that the counsellor has at the time. For example, the counsellor can tell the client that he is not comfortable with the way she is behaving if her behaviour is unacceptable. A counsellor has the right to cancel a